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12 October 1963



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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State Department review completed

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USSR-Berlin: *[[The USIB Watch Committee met in special session at 1430, 11 October, to consider developments bearing on the Soviet detention of US Berlin convoys on 10 and 11 October and the accompanying "show-of-force" by Soviet troops at the Babelsberg checkpoint on 11 October.]]*

[[The Watch Committee has reviewed all available evidence pertaining to Soviet bloc military activities. We discern no general readying of Soviet forces in the vicinity of Berlin or elsewhere in East Germany or the USSR. We discern no Soviet military preparations to expand the current convoy incidents into a major confrontation or to initiate other major harassing moves against the allied position in Berlin.]]

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*Berlin Situation: (As of 0430 EDT) The US
convoy remains at Babelsberg just outside Berlin.
The Soviets have been asked to send a senior offi-
cer to Babelsberg to discuss the situation. Their
reply is expected shortly. [REDACTED]

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USSR-Berlin: [Soviet interference with US convoys on the Berlin autobahn may be aimed in part at drawing the West into negotiations on both access procedures and the broader question of the status of Western forces in West Berlin]

[The USSR may be seeking to prepare the way for formally raising a demand for Western payment for the use of communication facilities on East German territory]

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[The Soviet leaders may believe that the test ban treaty and progress toward agreement on other issues of secondary importance have created an opportunity for reopening Berlin negotiations.]

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[Moscow probably foresees a protracted period of negotiations and plans to follow a step-by-step approach.]

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Using discussion of access procedures as an avenue for leading into the central problem of the status of Western forces in West Berlin.

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[As part of this strategy, the Russians may envisage further sporadic harassment of Western communications as a means of underscoring the issues they intend to press as well as generating pressure on the West to agree to negotiations.]

[Soviet officials in the past have made sporadic attempts to induce the US to change established autobahn procedures. They have always backed down, however, when faced with firm opposition to obstructions of passage on the access routes.]

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Dominican Republic: [An atmosphere of tension and unrest persists because of the government's continuing isolation [REDACTED]]

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[The departure of US aid personnel has shaken the confidence of the new government and its backers, while stiffening the resolve of its opponents, according to US Embassy sources in Santo Domingo. An accelerated election timetable calling for municipal and congressional elections in December 1964 and a presidential election in March 1965 reportedly has been established. The regime apparently believes that this will win US recognition.]

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[The failure of the police to capture any important extreme leftist leaders has led to speculation that this has been deliberate. [REDACTED]]

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Congo: The Adoula government is facing growing opposition from Congolese labor leaders.

The leaders of four unions, including the three largest, state that they will not sit on the planned special commission to draft a new Congo constitution unless the government is changed. The unions are apparently willing that President Kasavubu or Premier Adoula, or both, remain, if the rest of the cabinet is dismissed.

The US Embassy reports that the unions are not considering a general strike to enforce their demands, but notes that their attitudes are hardening. The unions are demonstrating greater unity and the Embassy believes that the situation could change rapidly. Labor leaders have told US officials their rank and file is as fed up with the government as it was with the parliament, which Kasavubu dismissed on 29 September.

Frustrated by rampant inflation, food shortages, and unemployment, the unions have long called for economic reforms and removal of high living, incompetent and corrupt cabinet ministers. A general strike over civil service salaries was only narrowly averted in late August, and a nationwide strike of teachers over nonpayment of salaries began on 7 October.

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NOTES

Iceland: The Thors government, which has only a minimum working majority in parliament, faces serious political and economic problems when the present provisional seven-and-one-half percent wage increase expires on 15 October. Both Communists and non-Communists are likely to press for considerably higher wages. The Communists, who control the central labor federation, are likely to resort to prolonged labor agitation which could result in widespread disillusionment with the Thors government.

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Honduras: Further evidence indicates that the official figure of 115 dead in the fighting on 3-4 October is extremely conservative. Although the true figure will probably never be known, it may have reached 1,000. The Honduran military's fanatical hatred for the Liberal-oriented Civil Guard probably led to excesses, and it seems clear that military leaders either sanctioned this, or were unable to restrain their subordinates.

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